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AUTHOR	Hill, Janice C.
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ABSTRACT

The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) at Queen's University (Ontario) delivers two models of teacher education. One is community-based, part-time, and for Aboriginal students only, who may enter with a secondary school graduation diploma or equivalent. The second is campus-based, full-time, and open to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students with an undergraduate degree. Graduates of both components are eligible for teaching certification within Ontario. Native communities maintain control and direction over the community programs, and ATEP goes only where it has been invited. Once invited, ATEP personnel and First Nations personnel identify stakeholders within the community to serve on the Program Management Committee (PMC). The PMCs direct program financing, content, scheduling, delivery, and staffing, and are responsible for any political lobbying and for providing support and advocacy for grant proposal submissions. They also have input into issues of Aboriginal education affecting the larger university community through the Aboriginal Council of Queen's. Another way that First Nations communities maintain control over the community-based programs is by employing the on-site coordinator, a position jointly funded and defined by the PMC, ATEP, and local education institutions. Challenges faced by ATEP include going beyond the inclusion of cultural information in preexisting structures to formulate a uniquely Aboriginal way of schooling, and convincing non-Aboriginals that Aboriginal people themselves should decide what their educational needs are. Appendix contains PMC terms of reference. (TD)

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A paper prepared for the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting
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Janice C. Hill
Acting Co-Coordinator
Aboriginal Teacher Education Program
Faculty of Education
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario Canada
hillj@educ.queensu.ca

"Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian." *(NIB, ICIE, p.9)*

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Aboriginal Teacher Education Program:
An Exercise in Partnership

Janice C. Hill
Acting Co-Coordinator
Aboriginal Teacher Education Program
Faculty of Education
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario Canada

"Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian."*(NIB, ICIE, p.9)*

Greetings. My name is Kanonhsonni (She is Making a House), in English I am called Janice Hill. I am a member of the Turtle clan of the Mohawk Nation, one of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy or Haudenosaunee. I live at Tyendinaga Territory located on the Bay of Quinte within Ontario, Canada. I have worked in the field of Aboriginal education for the last 15 years. Most recently I work as one of the Acting Co-Coordinators of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) delivered through Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. I have been with ATEP since it's inception and assisted in the initial development of the program.

This year, as we temporarily assumed the leadership of ATEP, my fellow Co-Coordinator and I articulated a vision and mandate statement which I would like to share with you as I feel it clearly indicates our personal commitment to the development and delivery of a teacher education program defined by and for Aboriginal people and delivered by Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people. We truly believe in partnership as the model most suitable for community based delivery. This is reflected in our vision. It is as follows:

Our Vision & Mandate

From the beginning we have understood ATEP to be a place where Aboriginal people could have a safe, supportive environment to learn about themselves, each other, and about non-Aboriginal people. ATEP was also to be a place where non-Aboriginal people could learn about themselves and about Aboriginal people. Together, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Teacher Candidates would learn about relationships, community, inter-relatedness and world view. Through such learning we have encouraged Teacher Candidates to create an educational environment responsive to the realities of the worlds within which Aboriginal children exist and conducive to the development of their individual gifts and of them as human beings.

As ATEP has grown we have endeavoured to foster partnership and team building between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, between the University and Aboriginal communities and between Faculty and Teacher Candidates involved in the program. In making program decisions we have tried always to remember those Aboriginal children our graduates will serve.

Keeping in mind the vision for ATEP we see our responsibilities as distinct yet inter-related. For Jan there is a responsibility to provide guidance and direction from an Aboriginal viewpoint to strive towards achieving that original vision. For her this includes providing a supportive role model for our Teacher Candidates, encouraging awareness and understanding of Native ways of knowing and being within the Faculty, advocating on behalf of Aboriginal issues within Queen's and the Kingston community, and sharing the knowledge she has acquired thus far as opportunities present themselves. It is her personal conviction that she has been guided to be in this place for a particular reason: to further the goal of Aboriginal Control of Aboriginal Education through the means which are available to her here, namely Teacher Education.

For Kate there is the responsibility to provide an example of non-Aboriginal partnership in action, collaborating with Aboriginal partners to identify the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in order to find ways in which Queen's may achieve excellence in Aboriginal education. In her work and studies in adult education and program planning, she searches out the kinds of program design and delivery which match Aboriginal community needs and support Aboriginal Teacher Candidates in their exploration of the 'learning and teaching life'. She brings to her work the belief that significant teachings last a lifetime, and fosters ongoing links between Aboriginal and University partners in order to create an environment for Aboriginal Teacher Candidates to both experience and offer significant teachings themselves.

For both of us there is the responsibility to provide opportunity and encouragement of Aboriginal Teacher Candidates and others who are supportive to explore and develop methods of education which are culturally relevant; responsive to the needs of Aboriginal peoples and communities; and which recognize, acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal distinctiveness.

In conclusion, above all, we see our roles here to be those which encourage our Teacher Candidates to develop as professionals, and which nurture a passion for the future of Aboriginal people through the education of Aboriginal children. It is

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our hope that ATEP will foster the creation of educational environments and partnerships which develop pride in, knowledge of and understanding of who Aboriginal people are in this country, where they came from and where they will go in terms of their own self determination. (Freeman/Hill, July 1997)

ATEP delivers teacher education on two models. One is community based, part time, and for Aboriginal students only, who may enter with a Secondary School Graduation Diploma (Grade 12) or equivalent. The second is campus based, full time, and is open to both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal students who have a completed undergraduate degree. Within the Education Act of Ontario, is a clause, Regulation 269, Section 6 which was inserted in the early 70's in an effort to increase the numbers of Aboriginal teachers, specifically teaching Aboriginal children. This section, stipulates the following:

> *"Where the dean of a college or faculty of education or the director of a school of education in Ontario reports to the Deputy Minister that a candidate,*
> *(a) has complied with section 2;*
> *(b) is of native ancestry;*
> *(c) holds the requirements for a Secondary School Graduation Diploma or standing the Minister considers equivalent thereto; and*
> *(d) has successfully completed an approved program of teacher education with concentration in the primary division and the junior division,*
> *the Minister may grant to the candidate an Ontario Teacher's Certificate, in Form 1, and an Ontario Teacher's Qualifications Record Card in Form 2 that indicates the areas of concentration successfully completed. R.R.O. 1980, Reg. 269, s.6.*

This is the premise upon which we developed and deliver our community based model. Aboriginal candidates with an undergraduate degree may apply for admission to the community based program and may also choose to obtain credentials in either the primary/junior division option or the intermediate/senior division option. Basically, and in theory, both programs are the same. The names and numbers of courses completed are the same. Those who have entered ATEP with a SSGD/equivalent graduate with a Diploma in Education. Graduates of the Diploma in Education who later complete an undergraduate degree are eligible to have their diploma upgraded to a Bachelor of Education. Those who have entered with an undergraduate degree, graduate with a Bachelor of Education. Graduates of both components are then eligible for recommendation for teaching certification

within the province of Ontario. This certification is provincial certification and is not meant to certify Aboriginal graduates to teach only Aboriginal children, nor only in Aboriginal or First Nations communities.

The major difference this year is in the number of weeks of practice teaching required to fulfill graduation requirements. On campus students complete 21 weeks of practicum as designated by the Faculty of Education. The community based students complete 9 - 11 weeks of practicum as directed by the local Program Management Committees of each program. Herein lies one of the main ways we strive at ATEP to maintain control and direction at the First Nation community level over program features, scheduling, content and delivery within the community based model. The model used in the western James and Hudson Bay area utilizes both placements and evaluated practicums. Students of this program are predominantly full time. Time that is not spent in structured classes, is spent in a mentoring relationship with experienced teachers. The goal is to strive for placements which will afford the teacher candidates the broadest experience in teaching. Teacher candidates of this program are encouraged to spend significant amounts of time in both primary and junior classrooms. Evaluated practicums are spent with different Associate Teachers from the placement teachers. This was the model recommended and requested by the Program Management Committee in the KW area in order to ensure significant practical experience.

Currently ATEP operates three community based programs within First Nations communities. These programs include the Manitoulin North Shore (MNS) Program located on Manitoulin Island and delivered in the Ojibway community of West Bay; the Kiskinnohamakaywi Weecheehitowin(KW) Program located in the western James and Hudson Bay area and delivered in the Cree community of Moose Factory; and the Kasabonika Lake (KAS) Program located and delivered in the Oji-Cree community of Kasabonika Lake.

As a beginning point it is important to know that ATEP goes where we have been invited. That is to say that the onus is on the First Nations to decide whether they want the delivery of a teacher education program in partnership with Queen's University. Once that decision has been made, ATEP personnel along with local First Nations personnel work in partnership to define the details of the partnership and funding and program issues. Normally, the first step in this partnership building is to identify stake holders within the local community/communities to

serve on the Program Management Committee (PMC). This is a decision left to the First Nations who will be involved in the management and control of the community based program. The PMC's are normally made up of both educational personnel and stake holders in education within the local First Nations community/communities. The membership may be made up of teachers, principals, directors of education, executive directors of local educational institutions or political representatives; but always also includes representation from the current student body. In this way, we ensure the students of ATEP also have a voice in decision making regarding their program of studies.

The mandate of these PMC's is largely to direct program financing, expenditures, content, scheduling, delivery and staffing. As required the PMC's are also responsible for any political lobbying and for providing support and advocacy for grant proposal submissions to government agencies. Through the forum of the university wide Aboriginal Council of Queen's the PMC's also have input and access to decision making about issues of Aboriginal education affecting the larger university community. Terms of reference developed by and for the KW PMC, and accepted by the Dean of the Faculty of Education articulate the extent to which the direction and input provided by the PMC is valued. These Terms of Reference articulate the committee's mandate as follows:

> "**2.0 Committee's Mandate**
> The primary function of the Committee is to provide overall direction and guidance to the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program. Specifically the Committee is mandated...
> 2.1 To maintain a high level of integrity in program delivery and performance.
> 2.2 To ensure a high level of professionalism among all faculty members, associate teachers and teacher candidates associated with the program.
> 2.3 To direct periodic program reviews by assessing the program's overall performance in responding to the needs in teacher education.
> 2.4 To provide guidance and direction in the implementation of recommendations identified to enhance program content and delivery.
> 2.5 To give advice on program enhancement in content and delivery by recommending curriculum content and guest lecturers.
> 2.6 To advise of changes in the educational setting that will affect the employment of graduates of the Program.
> 2.7 To maintaining a positive relationship with the communities.
> 2.8 To provide feedback on the communities perception of the program.

2.9 To screen applications of those applying for entry into the program.
2.10 To assist teacher candidates obtain sponsorship, scholarships and bursaries.
2.11 To ensure that all affiliated First Nations/Education Authorities, partner school boards and school administrators are well informed about the program.
2.12 To provide advice and direction in promoting the program."
(QU/KW ATEP PMC Terms of Reference, p.1)

Another way in which the First Nations communities maintain ongoing supervision and control over the community based programs is through employing an On Site Coordinator. This position is jointly funded and defined by the Program Management Committee/locally based educational institutions and ATEP. The way in which this particular partnership manifests itself is through the provision of physical space within an existing educational institution which is community based, a direct and ongoing working relationship between the On Site Coordinators and the personnel at the ATEP office and Queen's University, and continuous communications between Site Coordinators, ATEP staff and Program Management Committee members. The On Site Coordinator is the locally based link between Queen's University and the community based students. The students are normally from several different communities. For this reason it is important for these On Site Coordinators to develop and maintain positive and open relationships with the communities who are involved in order for there to be ongoing dialogue. It is also important for these On Site Coordinators to be knowledgeable about the policies and processes affecting the students and their programs. On Site Coordinators go through an initial orientation session on campus at Queen's to familiarize them with the ATEP operation and with the operation of ATEP within the larger Faculty of Education and within the larger Queen's community. At this time the On Site Coordinator also meets the many individuals in the many departments at Queen's which may impact on a students progress and completion of the ATEP. Through this orientation and open dialogue with the On Site Coordinators we generate a positive working relationship within the Faculty and the larger university community. In this way, partnership is encouraged and enhanced between the community based ATEPs and Queen's University.

One of our challenges has been to encourage our Program Management

Committees and Teacher Candidates to look beyond the inclusion of cultural information in pre existing structures and the inclusion of Aboriginal studies and Aboriginal languages as add ons to seeking a vision for a uniquely Aboriginal way of schooling. Many of those who come to the ATEP have been so indoctrinated into the western form of education that the notion of looking at schooling in an entirely different context is sometimes quite foreign. In the beginning of ATEP the majority of our students were mature, women who had been working in the field for several years and were now looking for provincial certification. This has changed somewhat in the most recent history of our delivery. More and more of our teacher candidates are younger, with more education and perhaps more political savvy. These younger people are the ones who have been willing to take up the challenge posed to them and to think about ways in which to make education more uniquely Aboriginal. For as was stated in the opening,

> "Unless a child learns about the forces which shape him: the history of his people, their values and customs, their language, he will never really know himself or his potential as a human being. Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian."(NIB, ICIE,P.9)

This was also the challenge in the early days of the development of the Program Management Committees. In the beginning the members of the committees would look to the ATEP personnel to provide direction and to point out the options available to them. Now, these Program Management Committees are directing the ATEP staff more directly on what they would like to see happening within the program and what types of programming and curriculum they want developed within their schools and by the teacher candidates whom they host. They have increasingly taken a proactive attitude towards defining Aboriginal education within their communities and they are directing ATEP programming in order to achieve the goals they have set for themselves and to meet the needs they have identified within their communities. These goals differ in the geographic areas largely due to the differing geography and cultural diversity of each of the ATEP community based programs. These Program Management Committees clearly demonstrate a strong, positive, working partnership relationship with the ATEP.

At the same time as we are developing these links with communities we are

also required to develop similar links within the University community. It has been a learning experience for faculty and staff alike to be made aware of the differing and diverse issues we face in delivering a teacher education program at a distance and in such culturally diverse communities. One such issue, which has an impact on scheduling for instance, is the time of the Goose Hunt in northern Ontario. The program we deliver in the western James Bay must not conflict with the goose hunt. This is a culturally and geographically significant event in those Cree communities we service which must be honoured. Situations such as the goose hunt sometimes make it impossible for our programming to coincide with the regular sessions of delivery within the larger framework of the university but we have worked out compromises and created awareness so the departments who are affected are aware.

Also, on a more positive note we have had much success in working within the larger university community and creating avenues which recognize the relevance of accomplishments in the development of our teacher candidates as professionals. As an example, we developed a roster of equivalencies to the initial corequisites of ATEP which recognized accomplishments in terms of writing, performing and artistic work as acceptable rather than having to complete academic study to meet the requirements for completion and graduation. To date, the list of corequisite requirements for the community based ATE programs exceeds the prerequisite requirements of the on campus program. On campus students are required to have .5 credit in anthropology, sociology or psychology. In the ATE program we prefer that this credit be a native studies course. For the community based ATE programs, students are required to either complete or show proof of 30 hours of course work, functionality or fluency in an Aboriginal language and Math for Teachers in addition to the .5 credit requirement in psychology, sociology or anthropology. Additionally, candidates to the Diploma in Education option are required to complete an Academic Skills course. These requirements were identified by the PMC's as the basic requirements necessary for teachers who would be teaching within their communities.

One of the biggest hurdles we initially faced was in convincing outsiders that the insiders, or Aboriginal people themselves were the ones who needed to define what comprised a successful educator, what needed to be included in the education and training of the teachers to prepare them to educate the Aboriginal child, that the Aboriginal communities were the ones who ultimately knew what their own needs

were in terms of education. These needs have not changed much. From the Indian Control of Indian Education document of 1973 to the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People of 1996, Aboriginal people in Canada have been saying the same thing. Aboriginal people must define, design, direct and deliver education for Aboriginal children.

We continue to work towards the advancement of Aboriginal education as defined by Aboriginal people and trust that our small successes are paving the way for even larger and broader successes within this field.

To date ATEP has graduated approximately 40 Aboriginal teachers from our community based delivery programs, many of whom are being employed within Aboriginal communities and, at schools which may have hosted them as teacher candidates on practicum. This indicates success to ATEP and also indicates achievement of the goals we initially outlined for ourselves in the development of the program. This number continues to grow and with it, the Aboriginal influence within the educational systems servicing Aboriginal children grows. And so our successes continue.

Appendix A

QUEEN'S/K.W.
ABORIGINAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Program Management Committee
Terms of Reference

Adopted by K.W. Board Motion 1996-43
October 15, 1996

1.0 Introduction

The Queen's/K.W. Aboriginal Teacher Education Program is a joint partnership arrangement who's primary object is to deliver a quality and culturally relevant community based teacher education program to the First Nation communities with Kiskinnohamakaywi Weecheehitowin.

2.0 Committee's Mandate

The primary function of the Committee is to provide overall direction and guidance to the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program. Specifically the Committee is mandated...

2.1 To maintain a high level of integrity in program delivery and performance.

2.2 To ensure a high level of professionalism among all faculty members, associate teachers and teacher candidates associated with the program.

2.3 To direct periodic program reviews by assessing the program's overall performance in responding to the needs in teacher education.

2.4 To provide guidance and direction in the implementation of recommendations identified to enhance program content and delivery.

2.5 To give advice on program enhancement in content and delivery by recommending curriculum content and guest lecturers.

2.6 To advise of changes in the educational setting that will affect the employment of graduates of the Program.

2.7 To maintaining a positive relationship with the communities.

2.8 To provide feedback on the communities perception of the program.

2.9 To screen applications of those applying for entry into the program.

2.10 To assist teacher candidates obtain sponsorship, scholarships and bursaries.

2.11 To ensure that all affiliated First Nations/Education Authorities, partner school boards and school administrators are well informed about the program.

2.12 To provide advice and direction in promoting the program.

3.0 Composition

The Program Management Committee shall consist of the following:

- First Nation educators representative of K.W. affiliate First Nation schools and communities.
- One teacher candidate representative.
- One representative of the Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program.
- One representative of K.W.

The ATEP On site Coordinator shall sit as an ex officio member of the Committee reporting and acting on the direction of the Committee.

4.0 Appointment

The K.W. Board shall appoint the six First Nation community representatives as well as their Board representative. The Director of Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program shall appoint their representative. And the teacher candidates shall appoint their representative.

5.0 Term of Office

The term of office for each community representative shall be three years from the date of appointment. The term of office for the student representative shall extend throughout the duration of the student's program of studies, providing that he/she remains in good standing with the program and fellow teacher candidates. The Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and K.W. representatives term of office shall be indeterminate however the appointed representative must meet the expectations of consistent, diligent and positive participation in Committee's affairs.

6.0 Committee Meetings

6.1 Frequency of Meetings

The Program Management Committee shall meet at minimum, quarterly.

6.2 Quorum

To conduct the business of the Committee a quorum of the Committee shall consist of the Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, the K.W. representative and three other members.

6.3 Chairperson

A Chairperson shall be selected by members of the Committee. The Chairperson's responsibilities shall be limited to convening and chairing orderly and effective meetings of the Committee using acceptable standards of order and conduct.

6.4 Meeting Procedures and Record

The On Site Coordinator shall maintain a record of all Committee minutes. Prior to convening a meeting an agenda shall be provided to each Committee member with available briefing materials one week in advance of regular quarterly meetings. The preparation of briefing materials and striking an agenda shall be the responsibility of the On Site Coordinator. All decisions of the Committee shall be recorded in the form of motions which shall be coded chronologically by year. (e.g. 1996/01)

7.0 Committee Reporting

The Committee shall report quarterly to the Director of Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and the Board of Directors of Kiskinnohamakaywi Weecheehitowin. The report shall consist of, but not necessarily be limited to,

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providing a status report on program delivery, program enhancements, enrollment data and student placements.

8.0 Amendments

Amendments to the terms of reference shall be filed before the K.W. Board of the Director of Queen's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and shall come into affect upon mutual sanction of the proposed amendments.

References

National Indian Brotherhood (1972). Indian control of Indian education. Policy paper presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. N.I.B.: Ottawa,Canada.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal People. (1996). Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Volume 3: Gathering Strength. Canadian Communications Group Publishing: Ottawa, Canada.